

LIHEAP PERFORMANCE MEASURES UPDATE

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★
★ Nothing great was ever achieved ★
★ without enthusiasm. ★
★ Ralph Waldo Emerson ★
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Collecting Utility Data – A Tale Of Two States

By Susan Marshall

One roadblock to collecting performance measures for many states is the cooperation of outside agencies. I recently spoke with Akm Rahman from Massachusetts and Christina Zamora from Idaho to see how they collect and use utility data.

Massachusetts uses 22 outside agencies for intake and processing of their applications. These agencies collect utility data, both electric and gas, for 70% of the clients. The data is requested once a year at the end of August. The utilities send electronic files to the local agencies using a pre-formatted spreadsheet. A software vendor for the state then merges the data from all the agencies and uploads it to the state's E-Government site. They receive actual yearly usage and heating cost

figures for each client.

Massachusetts has also added three questions to this year's LIHEAP application that will help them collect performance measures relating to utilities. They are:

- Did you receive a shutoff notice or did your oil company refuse to deliver oil in the past year?
- Were your services shut off or did you run out of oil in the past year?
- Was your heat restored because of fuel assistance?

Furthermore, a standard performance and consumption data collection format for utility companies is being implemented.

For more information on how Massachusetts collects and uses utility data, contact Akm at akm.rahman@state.ma.us.

Christina Zamora is an Energy Program Coordinator with Community Action Partnership Association of Idaho, a subcontractor responsible for the administrative oversight

including monitoring, training and technical assistance for Direct Service Providers who provide intake and processing services for heating assistance benefits in Idaho.

Idaho also requests yearly data from their heating vendors. They ask for 12 months of data, or as many months the client resided in the dwelling if less than a year. Idaho also sends a spreadsheet to the utilities but the data is collected manually. Christina said they send e-mail requests to the utilities and then remind them. She finds she gets more cooperation and faster service just prior to the LIHEAP season since the utilities understand the connection between LIHEAP and weatherization. In 2011, CAPAI worked with four major utilities that served approximately 52,000 households who received LIHEAP benefits. Some vendors provide usage information in therms, others in kilowatts and yet others in dollars.

Unlike Massachusetts, the data that Idaho gets from the utilities is congregate data versus individual client data. The data they receive is broken out by customers in general, low-income customers, and non low-income customers. They receive information on the number of total customers in Idaho, the number participating in the moratorium, the number of arrearages and the number of past due notices.

Idaho does not use a client's actual usage to determine their benefit. They do, however, make their spreadsheet available to their weatherization providers to identify high energy burden households. For more information, Christina can be reached at czamora@capai.org.

How do you collect and use utility data? Send us an e-mail at pmiworkgroup@gmail.com and let us know. We'd love to share your story in an upcoming issue.

New Process Overlays

By Chad Sawyer

PMIWG presented the following three process overlays at the annual meeting of the National Energy Assistance Director's Association (NEADA) in Florida: *State Plan, Client Application, and Vendor Agreement*. These

overlays provide suggestions on ways to incorporate data collection in the identified administrative activities. We hope they will trigger ideas or conversations around increasing your data collection capacity. To access these overlays

on Basecamp, please use the following link:

<https://acf2.basecampHQ.com/projects/6630169/files>. If you have any

questions, concerns or feedback, contact PMIWG at pmiwgroup@gmail.com

NEUAC 2011 Session Led by PMIWG Members

By Chad Sawyer

This year's National Energy and Utility Affordability Conference (NEUAC), held at the Marriot Harbor Beach Resort in Fort Lauderdale, FL from June 26 – 29, 2011, had many informative and engaging sessions. A standout was the panel presentation by PMIWG members titled: *Developing Partnerships to Measure Performance: Strategies from State Low Income Home Energy Assistance Programs*.

Although the session occurred on the last day of the conference, it was well attended and received. Ms. Leslie Lee (DE) moderated

presentations by Ms. Janet Cesner (OH), Mr. Akm Rahman (MA), and Mr. Richard Moffi (VT). Each presenter highlighted the importance of partnerships in measuring performance and offered best practices for developing partnerships to collect important data. Ms. Cesner and Mr. Rahman described strategies for dealing with regulated vendors, while Mr. Moffi discussed strategies for addressing unregulated vendors. They all provided information on their program composition, partnerships, motivating factors, databases, lessons learned, and benefits. Participants walked away

with a wealth of ideas and strategies to consider and possibly implement.

If you missed this very informative session at the 2011 NEUAC, you can access the PowerPoint presentation on Basecamp at the following link: <https://acf2.basecampHQ.com/projects/6630176-presentations/files>.

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SUMMER NEADA MEETING UPDATE

By Matt Orlovick

On Sunday, June 26, the Performance Measures Implementation Work Group made a presentation to the NEADA Summer Meeting in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. The Work Group provided updates on the Group's Basecamp website and provided a new email address (pmiwgroup@gmail.com), which States may use in addition to Basecamp to contact the Work Group with questions or feedback. In addition, three process overlays were presented.

The Work Group also provided a summary of the feedback received

from States concerning the data template for Tier 1 performance measures. The feedback will inform revisions to the template, which will be rolled out to States this fall. The Work Group plans to partner with NEADA to create a web-based data submission tool to make it easier for States to compile and submit information. Finally, the Work Group presented an overview of Tier 2 measures and how they will be collected. The template for Tier 2 will be given to states for testing later this year.

UPCOMING EVENTS

WEBINAR

SEPTEMBER 27 & OCTOBER 5

2:00 PM EST

USING TIER 1 AND 2 TEMPLATES

- Learn how to use this valuable tool.
- Call 1-800-369-1820;
- Passcode 7017592

Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Willing is not enough; we must do.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe